

SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

W239 N1812 ROCKWOOD DRIVE • PO BOX 1607 • WAUKESHA, WI 53187-1607 • TELEPHONE (262) 547-6721
FAX (262) 547-1103

Serving the Counties of:

KENOSHA
MILWAUKEE
OZAUKEE
RACINE
WALWORTH
WASHINGTON
WAUKESHA



MEMORANDUM

TO: Donna Brown-Martin, Director, Milwaukee County Department of Transportation

FROM: Ben McKay, Deputy Director, SEWRPC

DATE: August 23, 2023

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS AND STRATEGIES REGARDING TRANSPORTATION FOR SENIORS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Commission staff have prepared the following memorandum for the Paratransit Task Force in response to a request from Milwaukee County regarding the transportation recommendations for seniors and people with disabilities in VISION 2050, the long-range regional land use and transportation plan.¹ This memorandum also summarizes the strategies identified in the Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan for Milwaukee County.²

VISION 2050: A REGIONAL LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION PLAN FOR SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN

VISION 2050 proposes a substantial improvement and expansion of transit service in Southeastern Wisconsin over the next 30 years. VISION 2050 indicates that due to lack of funding, transit service levels would be expected to decline rather than significantly improve as recommended. The following recommendation includes improvements related to paratransit services, along with local bus, streetcar, and shared-ride taxi services.

Recommendation 2.4: Increase the frequency and expand the service area of local transit

VISION 2050 recommends that paratransit service be provided consistent with the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. Under ADA provisions, all transit vehicles that provide conventional fixed-route transit service must be accessible to people with disabilities, including those using wheelchairs. The recommended paratransit service would be available during the same hours as the local, express, and rapid fixed-route transit services, and be provided to eligible people on a 24-hour advance reservation basis. Fares on paratransit are Federally required to be no more than twice the amount charged for local fixed-route services.

¹ See SEWRPC Planning Report No. 55, VISION 2050: A Regional Land Use and Transportation Plan for Southeastern Wisconsin, July 2016, and updated in SEWRPC Memorandum Report No. 243, 2020 Review and Update of VISION 2050, June 2020.

² See SEWRPC Memorandum Report No. 251, Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan for Milwaukee County: 2021.

PUBLIC TRANSIT – HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION COORDINATION PLAN FOR MILWAUKEE COUNTY: 2021

Commission staff facilitates and prepares Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Coordination Plans for each of the seven counties in the Region. The Coordination Plans are intended to provide a framework to assist community leaders, human services agencies, and public transit agencies in improving public transit and human services transportation. Federal law requires that projects selected for funding under the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities program (Section 5310) be included in the coordinated planning process. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation utilizes the Coordination Plans to determine project eligibility for Wisconsin Employment Transportation Assistance Program (WETAP) funding. Several agencies and organizations in Milwaukee County have received funding under the Section 5310 and WETAP programs in the past.

The Coordination Plan for Milwaukee County, most recently completed in 2021, includes a prioritized list of strategies to address unmet needs within the county, including pursuing dedicated funding for public transportation, expanding partnerships to create more transportation options, and improving access to information on transportation services. The Coordination Plan also includes strategies to address unmet needs between counties, such as creating memorandums of agreement or understanding that create transit connections and identify funding opportunities.

* * *